

CHAPTER 4

About TMS and the SAN

Recently, during assistance visits to the field, it came to our attention that there is confusion between the **Security Assistance Network (SAN)** and the **Training Management System (TMS)**. People have a tendency to refer to the SAN as the TMS system and vice versa. Some seem to believe that when they are using the TMS system, they are actually logged on the Security Assistance Network. So let's try to straighten things out a bit and put it in a language that can be understood by all.

The Security Assistance Network (SAN) is the term that we use for the world-wide telecommunications system or network established for the S. A. community. The SAN provides the SAN Web system with all of its various functions: Bulletin Board, Library, Data Repository, Internet Web Page links, and it also provides E-mail accounts for all who have requested them. The **Standardized Training List** or **STL** is simply the program or module on the SAN that makes available the S.A. training data bases. It can be viewed and, of course, downloaded. The Training Management System or TMS is entirely separate. It is a stand alone, data base management system that operates independently on a PC in the training office. The STL data may even be downloaded on a separate computer than the one running TMS. It can simply be copied over to the TMS computer. TMS allows the training manager to identify training needed to fulfill specific training requirements. The training manager inputs all of the data on prospective students, thus establishing a historical database of country personnel trained by the U.S. The Invitational Travel Order (ITO) required by the Joint Security Assistance Training (JSAT) regulation can then be generated by merging data from all of the data bases. TMS generates reports for the training manager on his/her training program as desired. And, in the latest version of TMS, TMS 6.0, the SAO training manager can now upload data on departing students to the Security Assistance Network.

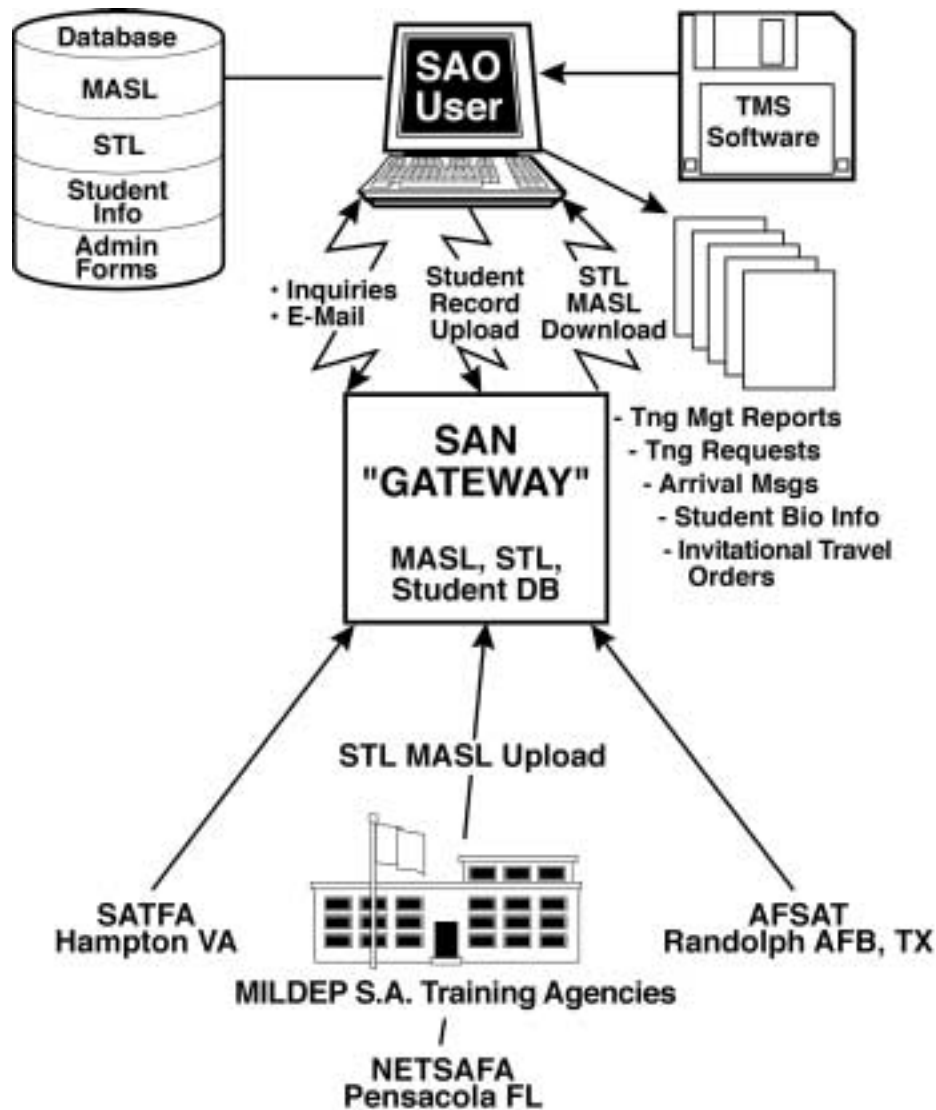
SECURITY ASSISTANCE NETWORK

The Security Assistance Network (SAN) consists of a telecommunications "gateway," selected options and databases stored at the gateway control point, and automated systems which can be accessed by passing through the gateway. Thus it is through the SAN that users are able to access the various international logistics and financial management systems. The Security Assistance Network, however, is used in an entirely different manner by the training community. The SAN actually plays host to the security assistance training management databases belonging to the military services. The Standardized Training List (STL) and the Military Articles and Services List (MASL) databases are available for data download to the over eighty countries that now have active users on the network. The "stand alone" Training Management System was developed for use at the overseas security assistance office (SAO) level to assist in all phases of the SAO's training management duties. Now with the addition of the international military student offices (IMSOs) at many training installations as active users on the network, the entire security assistance training community is using the SAN.

Establishment of the STL and MASL databases at the SAN host is portrayed in Figure 1-1. The standardized training list databases from the military service training agencies (SATFA, NETSAFA, and AFSAT) are transmitted to the SAN in Alexandria VA on a weekly basis.

There, for the first time ever, the separate Army, Navy, and Air Force portions of the S.A. training program are merged together into the Standardized Training List database that literally is the complete Country training program. Likewise, the MASL data is assembled on a weekly basis and is made available to the training managers who have need of this data. Even the few countries that are not currently accessing the SAN via the Internet, benefit from the availability of this data either via E-mail attachment or by the mailing of a data disk to the SAO.

FIGURE 4-1
Establishment of STL and MASL Databases



TRAINING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Training Management System (TMS) is a data base management system that operates in a stand alone PC environment at the SAO level. Use of the system is now widening to other training management levels at the Unified Commands and training installations. This software provides the training manager the requisite automation that has been needed for such a long time, particularly at the SAO level. Training management data that previously was provided via hard copy only, can now be handled in a modern data base management system that was custom developed for the SAO training manager. The system generates standard reports for the Training Manager. The system then allows for the input of data specific to the individual student. All of the databases are then merged and the Invitational Travel Order is printed by the system. TMS also generates training requests and E-Mail attachment messages which can be sent through normal E-mail.

TMS Version 3.1, using the SAN STL data, replaced the manual system which consisted of hard copy printouts of the Standardized Training Listing mailed monthly to the SAO by the Army, Navy, and Air Force training agencies. The MASL was also provided in hard copy format and mailed semi-annually. TMS 3.1, developed in 1990 using *Foxpro*, was "hard coded" and could not be changed without using a contractor at considerable expense. Consequently, a decision was made to use *Microsoft Access* to develop TMS 4.0 and to do it completely *in house* by the government. TMS versions 4.1 through 4.3 were subsequently fielded. TMS 5.0, a Microsoft Access 97 runtime program, was fielded in December 1999 and is Y2K compliant. TMS 6.0, a Microsoft Access 2000 and XP runtime program, is being fielded in Spring of 2002. Thus, TMS is actually a very sophisticated *Microsoft Access* application and, as such, offers tremendous flexibility. Additional new databases and functionality are constantly being added, such as the ability to upload data to the Security Assistance Network. TMS is also being completely reprogrammed to support the future Defense Security Assistance Management System (DSAMS) training module.

INTERNATIONAL MILITARY STUDENT OFFICE (IMSO) WEB

The IMSO Web system is simply a module on the SAN that provides incoming student population data to IMSO offices. And, the system allows the IMSO in turn to input critical data concerning their training location, their courses, and data about the international military students at their training activity. Fielding of the new IMSO Web system was begun in January 2002, at the annual Army IMSO Conference. The IMSO Web has also been fielded with U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Coast Guard training activities. Fielding with the Navy is underway and Air Force will also begin shortly. The cooperation of all service IMSO offices is earnestly sought. Consideration is being given to establishing an SAO Training Web that will give SAOs a very effective on-line viewing function of their training program that they have not had in the past.

COMMUNICATION BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

It is hard to imagine that there were those who did not think that the use of Electronic Mail would have a dramatic effect on the way we implement the S.A. training program. Training program communications that previously were handled by datafax, telephone, and military message are now accomplished via E-Mail. E-Mail is now routinely used between the SAO, unified command, military service training offices, and the military school houses. E-Mail is much less time sensitive in that messages can be sent out when the sender needs to regardless of whether the recipient is available. When he/she comes to work and checks the E-Mail an answer can be sent quickly and efficiently. Checking the E-Mail on a regular basis is quite essential, however. E-Mail now permits a user to "attach" any file to an E-mail message and send it with the message. Thus data files can actually be attached to E-mail messages, as well as attaching TMS output products. TMS prepares various documents, such as reports and Invitational Travel Orders and automatically attaches them to an E-mail message.

Some military service training managers have expressed the fear that we cannot trust the SAO and the school houses to communicate directly via E-Mail. In accordance with the Joint Security Assistance Training (JSAT) regulation, "routine" communication *is permitted* and already takes place via phone, fax, and normal message traffic. Again, electronic mail simply provides another means of communication, and the existing policies concerning communications apply similarly to E-mail. Actually, the E-mail system provides an easy way to send information copies to whomever the sender desires. The task at hand is that of overcoming the human inertia and resistance of those who have not used E-Mail in the past and are consequently unfamiliar with its utility and potential. Users of E-mail systems must identify the complete Internet E-mail addresses of all POCs with whom they routinely communicate.

SAN SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Computer equipment requirements are iterated in Table 1504-2 of the SAMM. All future acquisitions should meet these specifications. This is doubly important because the computer procured

may well be used for more than the TMS system or SAN. It may also be used for the Security Assistance Automated Resource Management Systems (SAARMS) module.

WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

What happens when you need help? Who you gonna call? Ghost Busters? Perhaps the following will answer those questions. First of all, try to solve the problem yourself, get help from someone else in your office, perhaps someone with a little more computer experience than you. Are there any computer support personnel in the Embassy or in your command who can help? Try all of your local resources first. Then, call your system administrator for assistance. Available computer support on the unified command staffs varies. Your system administrator will advise when he/she feels it is necessary to call DISAM for assistance. That is your next step. In the preface, the DISAM points of contact for assistance are listed. Please try to ask for the appropriate person. Please have your facts together and written down. We cannot solve problems when we simply don't know what they are. Try to duplicate the problem, cause it to happen again and write down what occurred or use print screen. Also it is important that you know your system configuration both in terms of hardware and software. DISAM can in turn contact other system experts when their assistance is needed.

DATA INTEGRITY

An awful lot of hard work has gone in to providing good quality, reliable data to the training manager. And, unfortunately, there is still work that remains. From time to time, whole sets of data, such as the STL data for a given FMS Case, is simply not there. In other words, the data simply wasn't uploaded to the SAN (the STL function) by the responsible military service. Sometimes specific data fields are left blank, either because the data wasn't entered by the responsible country manager or there is a military service system problem in that the data is not generated. Regardless of the reason, it is absolutely necessary that SATFA, NETSAFA, and AFSAT verify their data and insure that it is actually there. Performing this function is extremely important. The key word is "ownership." Look at it this way. If there was a problem with the data provided on the "old" hard copy listings, what would be done? The SAO would report the problem to the military service (the country manager), and he or she would correct the problem, perhaps even send a replacement listing. That same "ownership" applies to the military service's data that resides in the STL function (awaiting download by the SAO). It *still is* the military service's data and *they* are responsible for its quality. A lot of folks still don't recognize this problem or agree with the obvious solution. Today, the users of TMS have far more visibility of their training data. When there are problems with the data, *someone* is going to hear about it.

With the fielding of the new IMSO Web System, IMSO offices at our training activities are now busily updating the new detailed training location database. They are also verifying MASL data for training courses at their training activities and inputting recommended MASL database changes to the MILDEPs. We have never before had anyone with this ability to QA our actual MASL data and course descriptions. For the first time there is real optimism that, as a result of what our IMSO offices can now do, the overall quality of our data should dramatically improve.

USE OF THE SAN BY THE TRAINING COMMUNITY

The Security Assistance Network and the Training Management System have undergone extensive improvement and development to bring them to their current level. Ten years from now we will surely be using telecommunications systems of far greater capability. Never before has DSCA funded a project that was as important to the S.A. training community as the SAN and TMS are. It is certainly up to us as training managers to make the SAN and TMS work for us. Figure 4-2 represents the SAN as it is presently used in the world wide S.A. training community.

FIGURE 4-2
S.A. Training Community Use of the SAN

